

WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

1. A method for designing a new IC based on IC designing information transmitted from a manager, the IC designing information including standard library designing information and custom library designing information and being stored in, and managed by, the manager, the method comprising the steps of:

(a) transmitting at least part of the IC designing information, including a portion of the standard library designing information, from the manager to a design terminal through the Internet;

(b) getting the new IC designed by a user located at the design terminal in accordance with the at least part of the IC designing information;

(c) transmitting newly designed IC information, including new IC testing information to evaluate the new IC, from the design terminal to the manager through the Internet;

(d) getting the new IC evaluated by the manager based on the newly designed IC information; and

(e) adding at least part of the newly designed IC information to the custom library designing information that is stored in the manager, thereby updating the custom library designing information.

2. The method of claim 1, wherein the step (c) includes

the step of transmitting new IC connection information, and wherein the step (e) includes the step of adding the new IC connection information as custom library connection information to the custom library designing information.

3. The method of claim 1, further comprising, after the step (d), the steps of:

making new IC evaluation information based on a result of the evaluation; and

adding the new IC evaluation information to the newly designed IC information,

wherein the step (e) includes the step of adding the new IC evaluation information as custom library evaluation information to the custom library designing information.

4. The method of claim 1, wherein the step (a) includes the step of transmitting at least a portion of the custom library designing information as the at least part of the IC designing information.

5. The method of claim 1, wherein the step (a) includes the step of transmitting the custom library connection information as the at least part of the IC designing information.

6. The method of claim 3, wherein the step (a) includes the step of transmitting the custom library evaluation information as the at least part of the IC designing information.

7. The method of claim 1, wherein the step (e) includes the step of adding the new IC testing information as custom library testing information to the custom library designing information, and

wherein the step (a) includes the step of transmitting the custom library testing information as the at least part of the IC designing information.

8. The method of claim 4, wherein the step (a) includes the steps of:

making the manager determine whether or not the given design terminal belongs among authorized design terminals and/or whether or not the given user belongs among authorized users; and

transmitting the custom library designing information as the at least part of the IC designing information to the design terminal provided that the given design terminal is identified as one of the authorized design terminals and/or that the given user is identified as one of the authorized users.

9. The method of claim 8, wherein the step of making the manager determine includes the step of identifying the given design terminal by an electronic authentication number that is uniquely given to each authorized design terminal.

10. The method of claim 8, wherein the step of making the manager determine includes the step of identifying the given user by an ID and/or a PIN that are/is uniquely given to each authorized user.

11. The method of claim 8, wherein the step of transmitting the custom library designing information includes the step of narrowing the authorized users to a minimum range.

12. The method of claim 8, wherein if the manager has found the user not belonging among the authorized users, then the step (a) includes the step of transmitting the at least part of the IC designing information not including the custom library designing information at all.

13. The method of claim 9, wherein if the manager has found the user not belonging among the authorized users, then the step (a) includes the step of transmitting the at least part of the IC designing information not including at least a portion of the custom library designing information.

14. The method of claim 9, wherein if the manager has found the user not belonging among the authorized users, then the step (a) includes the step of transmitting the at least part of the IC designing information including the at least a portion of the custom library designing information.

15. The method of claim 14, wherein if the manager has found the user not belonging among the authorized users, then the step (a) includes the step of transmitting the at least part of the IC designing information, including the at least a portion of the custom library designing information, provided that the user pays an administrator of the manager and/or a designer of the custom library for the at least portion of the custom library designing information.

16. The method of claim 15, wherein if the manager has found the user not belonging among the authorized users and if the user is allowed to design the new IC by using the custom library designing information included in the at least part of the IC designing information, the method further includes, after the step (c), the steps of:

determining whether or not the new IC has been designed based on the custom library designing information; and

if the new IC has been designed based on the custom

library designing information, alerting the user to pay for the custom library designing information used.

17. A manager for managing IC designing information, the manager comprising:

standard library storing means for storing standard library designing information;

communication processing means for transmitting at least part of the IC designing information to a design terminal, which designs a new IC, through the Internet and receiving design information about the new IC from the design terminal through the Internet, the at least part of the IC designing information including at least a portion of the standard library designing information that has been read out from the standard library storing means, the newly designed IC information including new IC testing information to evaluate the new IC;

library evaluating means for evaluating the new IC according to the newly designed IC information that has been transmitted from the communication processing means;

custom library storing means for storing custom library designing information and for receiving the newly designed IC information from the communication processing means and adding the newly designed IC information to the custom library designing information, thereby updating the custom

library designing information; and

managing means for managing the custom library designing information and for determining whether or not at least a portion of the custom library designing information stored in the custom library storing means should be transmitted to the design terminal, wherein if the managing means has decided that the at least the portion of the custom library designing information should be transmitted to the design terminal, then the managing means adds the at least the portion of the custom library designing information to the at least part of the IC designing information by providing the at least the portion of the custom library designing information for the communication processing means.

18. The manager of claim 17, wherein the communication processing means receives a request for the custom library designing information from the design terminal over the Internet and forwards the request to the managing means, and

wherein on receiving the request every time, the managing means determines whether or not at least a portion of the custom library designing information stored in the custom library storing means should be transmitted to the design terminal.

19. A manager for use in the method of claim 1.

20. A design terminal for designing a new IC based on IC designing information transmitted from a manager, the IC designing information including custom library designing information and being stored in and managed by the manager, the design terminal comprising:

means for receiving at least part of the IC designing information from the manager through the Internet;

IC designing means for designing the new IC in accordance with the at least part of the IC designing information; and

means for transmitting newly designed IC information, including new IC testing information to evaluate the new IC that has been designed by the IC designing means, to the manager through the Internet,

wherein the newly designed IC information that has been transmitted to the manager is added to the custom library designing information that is stored in the manager.

21. A design terminal for use in the method of claim 1.

22. A program product defined specially for the purpose of managing IC designing information by making a computer function as:

standard library storing means for storing standard library designing information;

communication processing means for transmitting at least part of the IC designing information to a design terminal, which designs a new IC, through the Internet and receiving design information about the new IC from the design terminal through the Internet, the at least part of the IC designing information including at least a portion of the standard library designing information that has been read out from the standard library storing means, the newly designed IC information including new IC testing information to evaluate the new IC;

library evaluating means for evaluating the new IC according to the newly designed IC information that has been received at the communication processing means;

custom library storing means for storing custom library designing information and for receiving the newly designed IC information from the communication processing means and adding the newly designed IC information to the custom library designing information, thereby updating the custom library designing information; and

managing means for managing the custom library designing information and for determining whether or not at least a portion of the custom library designing information stored in the custom library storing means should be transmitted to the design terminal, wherein if the managing means has decided that the at least the portion of the custom library designing

information should be transmitted to the design terminal, then the managing means adds the at least the portion of the custom library designing information to the at least part of the IC designing information by providing the at least the portion of the custom library designing information for the communication processing means.

23. A program product defined specially for the purpose of designing a new IC based on IC designing information, including custom library designing information and being stored in, managed by, and transmitted from, a manager, by making a computer function as:

means for receiving at least part of the IC designing information from the manager through the Internet;

IC designing means for designing the new IC in accordance with the at least part of the IC designing information; and

means for transmitting newly designed IC information, including new IC testing information to evaluate the new IC that has been designed by the IC designing means, to the manager through the Internet,

wherein the newly designed IC information that has been transmitted to the manager is added to the custom library designing information that is stored in the manager.

24. An IC designing system comprising the manager of

claim 17 and the design terminal of claim 20.

25. An IC designing system for use in the IC designing method of claim 1.